To the Society of Inquiry,
Princeton Seminary.

University of Edinburgh
18th April, 1843.

Dear Brethren,

The pleasure we experienced in becoming acquainted with the contents of your interesting letter, certainly made us wish that you had favoured us with it sooner, but since you have excused yourselves so well, we heartily forgive you. We rejoice to learn that Almighty God has been shewing his goodness in visiting your land with so much of grace and blessing. All that relates to the condition of America must ever be deeply interesting to us, and as Christians, we cannot but feel a lively concern for the welfare of the church of Christ within your borders. We rejoice to think, that there are to be found among you so many living, faithful and active Christians, who will contend earnestly for the truth of the Gospel, and who will suffer all things, rather than yield to Error. —— It seems to be the growing conviction of the Church throughout the world, that she must soon suffer a more active assault from the agents of the powers of darkness. All things betoken an approaching conflict. The world will not tolerate the bondage of a pure Christianity. So long as it has done, the boundary-line between the two, must be more clearly defined, and all men will be forced to declare openly for the truth, or for Error —
You point to the progress of Popery in the States, especially in the West, and to its kindred error Anglicanism, as if

that were the forms of delusion which bid fair soon to over-shadow everything. And indeed, there can be no question, that Popery is progressing in this country, and all over the world. The adherents of that system, are intently watching every change and movement in the religious state of our land, ready of course to improve these to their own advantage. Every religious body in Britain, is at present more or less agitated by some important controversy. In regard to the Church of Scotland you are doubtless aware of most of the stages in the lengthened struggle which she has maintained against the encroachments of the Civil courts. This struggle has now been brought to an end. The Civil courts have declared that admission to the pastoral office is a ~~of~~ civil act, that Church courts may be compelled to ordain a man, although every individual in the parish is opposed to him, and that if a Presbytery refuse to ordain a man, on any ground except that of gross ignorance, or notorious immorality, their disobedience is a civil offence, punishable by fine and imprisonment.* Such being the conditions of the State's support as now declared, the Church if she continues in connection with the State, must give up her spiritual freedom. No true Christian could remain in such a Church. The struggle has now therefore ceased. The General Assembly meets on the 18th of May, and the faithful ministers and Elders of the church, will then separate from the State, many are making shipwreck of their stedfastness, and that the trial has come, and the hitherto Evangelical majority, will we fear be turned into a minority. So pray for those in the Church, who hold the truth, that they may be stedfast, even unto the end. It is expected that about 500 ministers, and the great proportion of Elders and people belonging to the Establishment will leave it. Preparations are being made

* A few weeks ago, the Presby.y of Dunkeld was fined £ 2,167. for refusing to ordain a man, who was rated by the people, & under libel for drunkenness, &c

for the ever state of things. Money is being gathered for the purpose of building Churches, and for the support of ministers. And Dr Chalmers has betaken himself to the work of organizing the "Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland," in which he looks for substantial assistance from friends in America. The question will in the next place be, are we to be allowed to have a free Christian church in this country, even when supported by the voluntary contributions of the people? We are inclined to think, that did a case arise which involved the principle of the freedom of the church of Christ in spiritual matters, the Civil Courts would denounce such a claim as preposterous. Time however will soon shew. We lately learned that the American Presbyterian Church is at present called upon to maintain this truth, in regard to marriages. We are firmly persuaded, that American Christians will not be slow to do right. Is this question settled? or how does the matter stand? — You must be in some degree acquainted with the state of the English establishment. The party which supports the views of the Oxford School, (which we believe with them to be the true principle of their church) is gaining power every day. They publicly boast, that a majority of the House of Commons is at their command, and if the "Factory Bill," at present before Parliament, which would place the whole system of National education in the hands of an intolerant clergy, should pass both houses, as it at present stands, it would be a glorious victory to the Anglicans. It is expected however that they will be defeated. In the mean time, various efforts are being made by sundry bishops & others, to restrain and cripple the efforts of some of her ministers who preach Christ too faithfully for their taste, which to be sure has ever been a sin in the eyes of High churchmen. The Evangelical party in that Church must soon leave, or submit. In Scotland, the Episcopal body has had a touch of controversy, from which, her bishops and dignitaries have always boasted, that in virtue of the peculiar purity of their Apostolical succession, they were entirely free. It is now beyond all question, that their communion-office teaches the Popish dogma of Transubstantiation.

And one of her ministers, with a number of people, have left her communion, not on that account merely, but also because the bishop refused to allow of the holding of a prayer-meeting without the use of the liturgy. The Presbyterian Secession Church is agitated by disputes on the 'Extent of the Atonement' many of her ministers have adopted views which are in many respects unscriptural, and some have on that account been cut off from the body.

Unitarianism is at a very low ebb, in Scotland especially. With us men seem to prefer taking the direct road to Infidelity at once, to the round about way of Unitarianism. Accordingly, we have Infidels, and these in of just late magnitude and effrontery. What think you of their printing a paper filled with sundry extracts from the Bible, relating to breaches of the seventh commandment &c along with their comments and illustrations, which may be guessed at, and putting it into the hands of the students, at the University gates.

The state of this country at present, is such as to cause fears in the calmest mind. There are immense masses of people, especially in the manufacturing districts who are uneducated and irreligious, and who cherish a spirit of sullen discontent, and an impatience of restraint, which bid fair one day to break forth upon society. Truly, our rich had better look after their riches. There must be a change soon, Instead of it requiring a miracle to produce a revolution in this country, it would take a miracle to prevent it. Amidst all this gloom, there are many things of a cheering nature. Evangelical religion has much increased (~~in this country~~) within the last few years, nay, it has become almost fashionable. And you can thus easily imagine how a dead religionism prevails to a vast extent in all the Churches in this country, and the Christianity we have, is not, generally speaking, of a high order. We need to be aroused, and it would seem God is about to do this. It will gratify you to learn that of late there have been several revivals of religion in the Highlands of Scotland, and that in some places, the work of God is still going on. In the island of Skye, one of the Hebrides, the change upon the people has been most wonderful. Some hundreds appear to have been converted. Intelligence has reached us that great power has been accompanying the preaching of the Word, in Argyllshire, Ross & Inverness-shire

In regard to our University, we lament that the great majority of our fellow Students are indifferent to religion. Nor do we except the Theological Hall. We have about 150 Theological Students, but but few of these are apparently converted to God. Dear Brethren, do pray for our Students. We have endeavoured, both in connection with our Association, and as individuals, to do something for the souls of our fellow Students, and we believe that our labour has not been altogether in vain. At the request of our Association, three Sermons have been addressed to Student and young men, during the past Session. The first of these, preached by Dr Candlish of this city, was peculiarly powerful. As this discourse has been published, we would like to know if you have seen it. ——

There is a pleasing feature in the history of the closing Session, which we must mention. It is the formation by a number of Medical Students of a Medical Missionary Society. They hold stated meetings for prayer, and the reading of Medical Missionary intelligence. One of these young men purposes going out to Syria, or China. You have asked, if any among us have devoted themselves to Missionary labour? —— Several have determined to labour in some of the Colonies, and we know of more than one, who are ready to go whenever the Lord shall call them. At the same time, we dare not conceal from you the fact, that Missionary zeal has greatly abated among us, just because godliness has. The attendance at our weekly meetings is not so numerous as it used to be. last year, generally about 60 young men attend. And of Divinity Students about 18 is the average number who come. As the Session has just closed, our regular meetings may cease, but some in town during Summer, meet every Saturday morning for prayer. — Our funds also have sadly fallen off this year. For three years we have been enabled to raise £300, for the support of Mr Baird and as our Missionary at Madras, who is at the same time, under the direction of the General Assembly's Committee. But this year, we regret that to all appearance our funds will be short. Brethren pray that God would revive his work in our souls, and make us active & self-denying. We cherish the hope that days of Spiritual life and power are coming upon Scotland. And as America has been supplying much of revival, let Christians there, ask God to revive his work in this poor land. We would like, if in your next letter, you would give us a little information on the subject of slavery. Does the fact of a man's being a slave dealer, or rather slave holder,

in any way affect the privilege of church membership in any Christian body? In conclusion, permit us to hope that our interchange of letters may be more regular. Your letter has given us much pleasure, and we heartily thank you for the prayerful sympathy which you have expressed towards the suffering Church of Scotland. Such things are delightful and encouraging beyond measure. We were happy to witness at last Assembly of the Church of Scotland proofs of friendship from the American Presbyt. Church. At that

In haste & with affection yours truly
Alex. Duncan
Thos. Chalmers
Jas. Hamilton
T. S. Bladen. A. Keith. Jr. Edin.